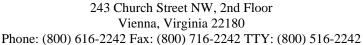
National Child Care Information Center

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CAREERS in EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Child care can be an exciting and rewarding field. Working in child care presents a wonderful opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of children and their families in your community. Research has demonstrated the significance of a child's early years for brain development. It also has confirmed the importance of the early childhood workforce, and the education of the workforce, and its impact on children and high-quality child care.

The child care and early education profession encompasses people who work with young children and families in a variety of settings, including center-based programs, school-age programs, family child care homes, group child care homes, child care resource and referral (CCR&Rs) agencies, early intervention settings, and early childhood special education programs. Early childhood education also includes professionals working with other early childhood professionals and parents.

The following information is specific to educators working directly with young children, and provides a starting point for exploring the range of career opportunities in early childhood education. The information includes resources specific to careers in early childhood education, information about national accreditation organizations for early childhood programs, and links to State and local resources.

RESOURCES

- Who are these people? A Guide for Child Care Professionals (2003) by the National Academy of Sciences, is a booklet that presents information on early childhood development and education to adults who care for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Tips are presented to promote social and emotional growth; language, communication, and early literacy; and cognitive growth. By being aware of individual strengths and vulnerabilities and being sensitive to cultural, language, and socioeconomic backgrounds, caregivers can become skilled at identifying needs and creating effective learning experiences that build on a child's existing skills. This resource is available in Spanish and English. For additional information, contact 800-624-6242 or http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10696.html.
- The Occupational Outlook Handbook, by the U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), is designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives. Revised every two years, the Handbook describes what workers do on the job, working conditions, the training and education needed, earnings, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations. The entries "Childcare Workers," "Teachers-Preschool, Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary," and "Teacher Assistants" in Occupational Outlook Handbook each provide information about the following:

nature of the work; working conditions; employment; training, other qualifications, and advancement; job outlook; earnings; related occupations; and sources of additional information. "Childcare Workers" is available on the BLS Web site at http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos170.htm. "Teachers-Preschool, Kindergarten, Elementary, Middle, and Secondary" is available on the Web at http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos069.htm. "Teacher Assistants" is available on the Web at http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos153.htm.

- The *Career Guide to Industries*, by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides information on available careers by industry. The *Career Guide* is a companion to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, which provides information on careers from an occupational perspective. "Childcare Services" in *Career Guide to Industries 2004-05 Edition* includes information about the nature of the industry, working conditions, employment, occupations in the industry, training and advancement, earnings, outlook, and sources of additional information. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.bls.gov/oco/cg/pdf/cgs032.pdf.
- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is the nation's largest organization of early childhood professionals and others dedicated to improving the quality of early childhood education programs for children birth through age 8. NAEYC produces many publications for early childhood professionals, including resources about program administration, relationships with families, professional development, the early childhood profession, careers, developmentally appropriate practice, and public policy and advocacy. NAEYC's publications specific to careers and the early childhood profession include the following:
 - Careers in Early Childhood Education (2003) (#505) is an updated brochure that describes what it takes to work with young children, and the options for professional preparation and job opportunities.
 - Career Encounters: Early Childhood Education (1994) (#815A) is a video and viewer's guide that includes professionals at work in many roles and settings (including public school, family child care, Head Start, and corporate child care) and hearing them talk about their work. The viewer's guide provides background information and discussion questions.
 - Careers for Men in Early Childhood Education (2001) (#594) is a brochure developed by men for men to let them know about the many possible early childhood jobs.
 - Real Men or Real Teachers? Contradictions in the Lives of Men Elementary School Teachers (2001) (#129) is a book that explores the professional lives of male elementary school teachers.
 - *NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment* (1998) (Revised edition) (#503 English, #504 in Spanish) is a brochure of a code of ethics for early childhood educators that offers guidelines for responsible behavior and sets forth a common basis for resolving ethical dilemmas encountered in early childhood education.

- Ethics and the Early Childhood Educator: Using the NAEYC Code (1999) (#110) presents a useful framework as well as examples and questions that serve to clarify key points and stimulate reflection and discussion on critical issues.
- Teaching the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct: Activity Sourcebook (2000) (#118) is for use with Ethics and the Early Childhood Educator: Using the NAEYC Code, and provides engaging, effective ways to introduce the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and explore ethical issues facing early childhood educators.

Additional professional development, leadership, and advocacy resources are available from NAEYC. NAEYC's online catalog is available on the Web at http://www.naeyc.org/shoppingcart/catalogitems.aspx. To order resources, call 866-NAEYC-4U or e-mail NAEYC@pbd.com. For additional information, contact NAEYC at 800-424-2460 or 202-232-8777, or on the Web at http://www.naeyc.org.

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

A number of organizations have developed accreditation systems to recognize child care and early childhood programs that generally meet higher standards than are required by State regulations. Accreditation is a voluntary process designed to improve the quality of child care programs by establishing benchmarks for quality. Achieving accreditation involves extensive self-study and validation by professionals outside the program to verify that quality standards are met. National accreditation systems for early care and education programs include:

- NAEYC Academy for Early Childhood Program Accreditation can be contacted at 800-424-2460, ext. 11360 or on the Web at http://www.naeyc.org/accreditation;
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) can be contacted at 801-269-9338 or on the Web at http://www.nafcc.org/accred/accred.html;
- National Early Childhood Program Accreditation (NECPA) can be contacted at 800-505-9878 or on the Web at http://www.necpa.net; and
- National AfterSchool Association (NAA) (formerly the National School-Age Care Alliance) can be contacted at 617-298-5012 or on the Web at http://www.nsaca.org/accreditation.htm.

To learn of child care programs that have been accredited in your area, visit these organizations' Web sites or contact them directly.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- To learn about child care initiatives in your State, visit your State's Child Care Home Page. These links are available in the State Profiles section of NCCIC's Web site at http://nccic.org/statedata/statepro/index.html and under Directories at http://nccic.org/statedata/dirs/statehp.html.
- The publications of the Center for the Child Care Workforce (now the Center for the Child Care Workforce, a project of the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, CCW/AFTEF), include the following:
 - Working for Quality Child Care: Good Child Care Jobs = Good Care for Children (2001) covers the following topics: the current status of the U.S. child care workforce; the links between quality care for children and high-quality work environments for teachers and providers; model work standards, including building better personnel policies and working relationships in child care programs; and leadership and professional growth, both in the workplace and beyond.
 - Creating Better School-Age Care Jobs: Model Work Standards (2001) notes that the
 Model Work Standards are designed as an education tool to articulate what school-age
 providers need in order to have a high-quality work environment; an assessment tool for
 evaluating how a school-age care program measures up to providing a high-quality
 workplace; and a planning tool for setting goals to improve job conditions and measuring
 success.
 - Creating Better Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards for Teaching Staff in Center-Based Child Care (1999) is a tool for assessing the child care center work environment and developing both program and community strategies for making improvements. This resource includes criteria for wages and benefits, time off, job descriptions and evaluations, hiring and promotions, grievance procedures, professional development, supervision, decision-making, communication, diversity, the physical setting, health and safety, and professional support.
 - Creating Better Family Child Care Jobs: Model Work Standards (1999) presents family
 child care providers with guidelines for making improvements in their jobs. It discusses
 provider income and benefits, hours of work, provider-parent communication,
 professional development, the family child care home as a work environment, the
 provider as employer, and community support for creating better family child care jobs.

Ordering information is available on the Web at http://www.ccw.org/publications order.html. For additional information, contact the Center for the Child Care Workforce, a project of the American Federation of Teachers Educational Foundation, at 202-662-8005 or on the Web at http://www.ccw.org.

■ When available, State and local initiatives that are designed to improve child care jobs

are listed with Web site links on the CCW/AFTEF Web page, State and Local Initiatives: What's Happening in Your State? at http://www.ccw.org/policy_yourstate.html. For additional information, contact CCW, a project of AFTEF, at 202-662-8005 or on the Web at http://www.ccw.org.

- The *National Directory of Early Childhood Teacher Preparation Institutions* (4th Edition, 2000), by the Council for Professional Recognition and the National Center for Early Development and Learning (NCEDL), contains listings for nearly 1,400 two- and four-year colleges. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.cdacouncil.org/home/ndir.htm. For additional information, contact the Council for Professional Recognition at 800-424-4310 or on the Web at http://www.cdacouncil.org.
- Additional information about the early childhood workforce is available in the Workforce and Professional Development topic in the Popular Topics section on the NCCIC Web site at http://nccic.org/poptopics/index.html#workforce.

The National Child Care Information Center does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.